

Given the choice of several authors, the reader selects the one best qualified in a subject.

UNIT 1
Lesson 1
Critical Reading

TECHNICAL TALK

Part of critical reading is finding the right author. There are some writers who know almost everything there is to know about something. But there are also people who know very little about their subject. That doesn't always keep them from writing.

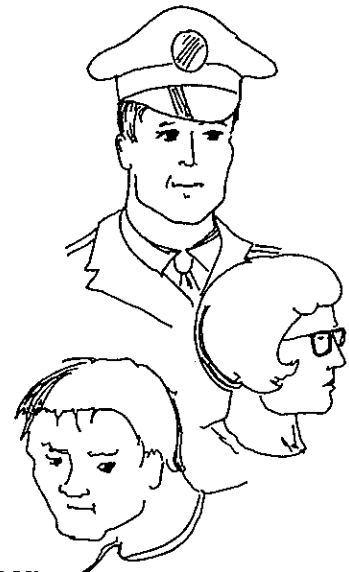
For example, if you wanted to know about how high schools are run, which person would you ask?

- A retired sea captain who has not been in school for 30 years.
- A 17-year-old who has been in high school for two years.
- An elementary school teacher.

You would probably ask the high school student. That is the person with the most information about the high school.

TRY IT

There are three subjects below and several authors. Match the best writer for each subject.



WHO CAN YOU TRUST?

Subject	Author
___ 1. The Civil War	(a) A man who was once President
___ 2. The Model T Ford	(b) Someone who rode trains for 30 years
___ 3. The White House	(c) A general who has studied the history of wars
	(d) A mechanic who owns antique cars
	(e) A policeman interested in art

REVIEW

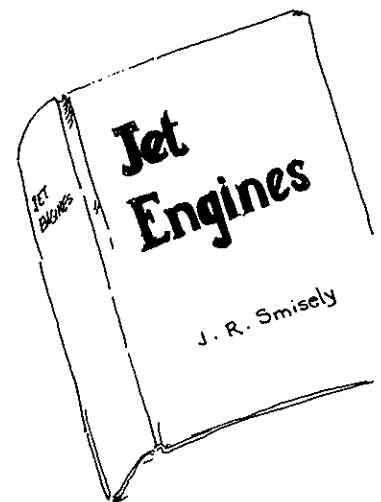
UNIT 1 Lesson 2 Critical Reading

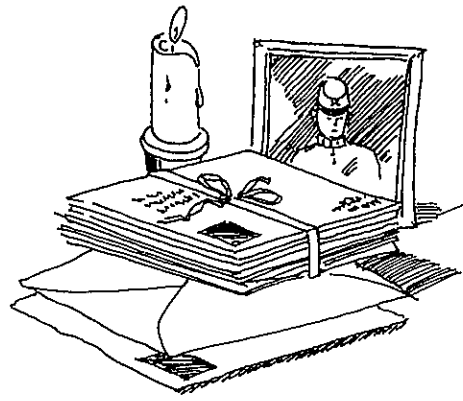
If you picked (c) the general, (d) the mechanic, and (a) the ex-President, you are right. Each of these people has the experience he needs. Remember, the person who has experience or training will usually be more expert than the one who has none.

FIND THE EXPERT

Which of these authors wrote about a subject he or she knows about? Mark one box with an "X" to show which one is the expert.

1. ☐ Anne J. Arbuckle teaches at a college. She is a very good teacher, especially in American history. She likes people and helps them whenever she can. Dr. Arbuckle has many hobbies. She likes to ride horses, and she takes pictures. She reads a lot about the history of art. She wrote a book titled *The Cat as a House Pet*.
2. ☐ Jonathan R. Smisely loves old cars. His friends say he is the best mechanic they know. He can listen to a car for two minutes and tell what is wrong with it. John also collects old auto parts and pictures of cars. He wrote a book about the engines in jet planes.
3. ☐ Anne Jantzen is a high school student who likes to cook. She has lots of friends who come to her house just to hang around and talk. She learned a long time ago that parties are more fun if there is plenty to eat. She started cooking snacks for her friends. They think she does a great job. She does especially well on pizza and certain sandwiches. Carol wrote a book titled *Thirty Snacks for Drop-Ins*.





THE CIVIL WAR—WHO KNOWS?

All of the authors below plan to write about the same subject—the American Civil War. Each one has had special experiences that will help him or her write about a certain part of the war. Match the author with the two books each person might be best qualified to write.

(a) Jane Bouton had a great grandfather who was a boy during the Civil War. He used to tell her stories about how he grew up during the war years. She has been interested in those days all her life. She has read dozens of diaries and letters written by parents and friends to soldiers who fought in the war. She even has a collection of letters sent to soldiers by wives who stayed at home and waited for news.

(b) Earl Stanton has been interested for many years in Civil War battles. He owns an old cannon he believes was used in one battle. On his vacations, he visits the battlefields of the war and takes notes on the things he sees. He has even written to generals asking them about battles and how they were fought.

(c) James Stout is interested in medicine. He found out that “doctoring” during the Civil War was often crude and dangerous. The doctors had nothing to kill germs with in those days. Operations that are easy today often killed soldiers who were hurt. Arms and legs had to be cut off to save many men. Stout has studied the ways doctors worked.

- ___ 1. A book about the weapons used in the Civil War.
- ___ 2. A book about the kind of wounds caused by fighting.
- ___ 3. A book about how the war affected children.
- ___ 4. A book about the three longest battles fought in the Civil War.
- ___ 5. A book about the number of men who died in Army hospitals.
- ___ 6. A book about the problems people at home had in getting food during the Civil War.

HOW DID YOU DO?

